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THE COMMISSIONERS' HANDBOOK

Guidelines for Boards, Commissions and Committees

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Adopted by the City Council, City of Berkeley, California

December 13, 1977

Prepared by the Council Subcommittee on Boards, Commissions and Committees - Councilmembers Carole Davis, Shirley Dean, Gilda Feller - and assisted by Ylse Brieger, League of Women Voters and Carol Sibley, A Dream for Berkeley. Staff: Edythe Campbell, City Clerk, and Myrna Walton, Senior Administrative Analyst.

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City Of Berkeley

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

WARREN WIDENER
MAYOR

December 13, 1977

Members of boards and commissions provide an invaluable service to our City. They advise the City Council on a wide variety of subjects by making recommendations on important policy matters. Over the years, the services and programs provided by the City have expanded. Without the assistance of the various boards and commissions, the City Council could give many complex and significant matters only a perfunctory review. The detailed studies and considered advice of boards and commissions are often catalysts for innovative programs and improved services.

Serving on a board or commission can be a rewarding experience for community service minded residents. It is an excellent way to participate in the functioning of local government and to make a personal contribution to the improvement of our community. If we are to have government "of the people, by the people and for the people," we must have the continued participation of the many dedicated board and commission members. Making local government effective and responsive is everybody's responsibility.

On behalf of the City Council, I wish to thank each board and commission member for their service and extend an invitation to all residents of the City to give serious consideration to serving on a citizens' advisory body.

Warren Widener

WARREN WIDENER Mayor Digitized by the Internet Archive in 2025 with funding from State of California and California State Library

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INTRODUCTION

COMMISSION ORIGINS

The City of Berkeley enjoys a wide variety of Council-appointed citizen boards, commissions and committees which advise the Council on numerous issues. As citizen participation has evolved into a vital and integral part of local government, the number of commissions has steadily grown so that there are now 28 such bodies functioning within the City of Berkeley, not counting the Board of Education, which is politically independent of the City Council. These commissions originate from four different sources: The Charter, Council action, vote of the people, and federal or state mandate. In addition, the Council appoints representatives to a variety of non-City commissions.

A. Charter

The present Charter, first adopted in 1909, initially authorized a Personnel Board, a Civic Art Commission, a Welfare Commission, and a Board of Library Trustees. Reference to specific commissions, except for the Board of Library Trustees, was deleted from the Charter in 1974.

B. Council Ordinance, Resolution or Motion

Indefinite Tenure

The overwhelming majority of commissions are created to perform generally defined duties within a sphere of interest for an indefinite period of time by ordinance, resolution or motion of the City Council under the general authority of the Charter. From time to time, the Council, perceiving the need for a new and specialized body, creates a new commission. The following commissions were created for an indefinite period of time: Board of Adjustments, Citizens' Humane Commission, Civic Art Commission, Commission on Aging, Community Health Advisory Committee, Community Redevelopment Commission, Disaster Council, Human Relations and Welfare Commission, Personnel Board, Planning Commission, Recreation Commission, Solid Waste Management Commission, Waterfront Advisory Board, and Youth Commission.

Limited Tenure

From time to time the Council establishes a commission or task force for a specific purpose and a limited period of time. An example of this is the Master Plan Review Committee which recently completed a revised Master Plan and disbanded. Existing commissions of limited tenure and their dates of expiration are: The Citizens' Commission on Undergrounding Utilities (December, 1982), Economic Development Commission (February, 1978), Energy Conservation and Alternative Energy Development Commission (April, 1979), Landmarks Preservation Commission (June, 1980), and Transportation Commission (November, 1979). The Council may extend the tenure of a commission.

C. Federal and State Mandate

Certain commissions are required by federal or state law. While the purpose and duties are specified by federal or state law, appointments are made by the City Council to the following: Child Health and Disability Prevention

Board, Commission on Employment and Training, Community Action Agency Administering Board, Housing Advisory and Appeals Board, Mental Health Advisory Board, and Relocation Appeals Board.

D. Voter Initiative

Two bodies derive authority from ordinances resulting from a measure adopted by the voters. These are the Fair Campaign Practices Commission and the Police Review Commission.

E. Miscellaneous

There are several commissions which are not usually created by the Council, to which the Council may appoint only one or two members; the remainder are appointed by other agencies. Usually these are commissions which are countywide or regional in nature. Appointees may be Councilmembers, staff members, or citizens. This category includes, but is not limited to, the Mosquito Abatement Board, Overall Economic Development Plan Citizen and Governing Officials Board, U.C. Police Review Committee, Two-by-Two (City-School), Alameda County Solid Waste Management Authority, and Alameda County Human Services Council. These commissions are not subject to the guidelines in this handbook.

Despite the wide variety of sources of authority, all commissions listed above share a common characteristic, which is that some or all members are appointed by the Council, either by the Mayor, subject to confirmation by the Council, by the Council as a whole, or by each individual Councilmember. Other bodies which advise the City Council, such as the South Berkeley Senior Center Board, Young Adult Project Board, Bananas and the Berkeley Coordinating Council for Children Services are independent, non-profit agencies, which are neither appointed nor controlled by the City Council, but nevertheless play an important advisory role. These groups, being independent, create their own guidelines and rules and the procedures outlined in this manual do not apply to them.

COMMISSION FUNCTIONS

The activities of the commissions are varied, but generally fall into four categories. Any particular commission may belong to one or more of the types listed below and all boards belong to the fourth type (see Appendix).

A. Quasi-Judicial

Certain commissions have the authority to make binding decisions which require or restrict the action of individuals. For example, the Board of Adjustments grants or denies variances and use permits under the Zoning Ordinance. The Housing Advisory and Appeals Board may order a structure in violation of the Housing Code to be repaired or demolished. Aggrieved parties have the right to appeal to the City Council. Other commissions with quasi-judicial powers are the Fair Campaign Practices Commission, the Landmarks Preservation Commission, and the Planning Commission.

B. Administrative

The Board of Library Trustees manages the library and is empowered to appoint, discipline and dismiss library employees. It is the only City commission with administrative powers.

The Board of Education is an independent political entity which administers the School District. Members to this board are elected by the voters and are not under the control or regulation of the City Council.

C. Advisory to the City Manager

The Personnel Board conducts hearings on employee grievances and makes recommendations to the City Manager, who is the only person authorized to hire, discipline or fire employees. Similarly, the Police Review Commission investigates complaints against police officers and advises the City Manager of its findings.

D. Advisory to Council

All commissions advise the City Council concerning policies and programs. For example, the Recreation Commission advises the Council regarding public recreation needs and programs. The Citizens' Humane Commission makes recommendations to the Council concerning the care, treatment and control of animals. The Planning Commission prepares recommendations to the Council for a Master Plan for physical development.

I. COUNCIL COORDINATION

A. Relation to Council

All commissions, even those which are quasi-judicial, administrative or advisory to the City Manager, also advise the City Council. As the only authorized legislative body of the City (with the exception of the Board of Education for educational affairs), the Council is responsible for accepting, rejecting, or modifying commission recommendations. The Council relies on the various commissions to increase the variety of viewpoints and talents brought to bear on City problems. By concentrating on specific areas, commission members expand their expertise and conduct detailed analyses that the Council itself may not have the time to pursue. It is expected that commissions will adopt positions of advocacy within their specific spheres of interest. However, the Council's role is to take into consideration the many varied and sometime conflicting public needs and render its judgment of what will best serve the public good. The Council must weigh the effect of any given recommendation, not only on the particular area of interest, but on all other City goals and programs.

Just as the commissions advise the City Council concerning policy but do not create policy, so, too, do the commissions advise the City Council concerning various programs run by the City, but do not themselves operate programs. The sole exception to this principle is the Board of Library Trustees, which has administrative powers. It is the responsibility of the City Manager and the City staff to operate programs authorized by the City Council. In a few cases, a specific program will be designated by the Council to be sponsored by a specific commission. The Youth Commission, for example, sponsors an annual youth symposium.

B. Communications From the Council

The City Council transmits referrals for information or action through the City Clerk who notifies the Secretary of the commission, whose responsibilities are discussed on page 14. The Secretary then notifies the commission. When appropriate, the Council indicates a desired date for response and other commissions that are to be consulted.

C. Communications to the Council

A commission transmits its findings or other communications to the Council through the Council agenda. The Secretary is responsible for preparing materials in the proper format and submitting them by the due dates specified in Administrative Regulation No. 1.20. All materials submitted to the Council are signed by the Chairperson or by the Secretary on behalf of the commission. The statement of the commission's recommendations shall indicate the vote as follows:

Yes - Commissioners A, B, C, D, E

No - Commissioners F, G Abstain - Commissioners H

Absent - Commissioners I

As described in Administrative Regulation No. 1.20, the commission may submit consent calendar items, reports for action and reports for information. To be accepted for the agenda, reports for action must conclude with a specific recommendation for Council approval, adoption or authorization. Such recommendations should be clear and spell out who is taking action and what the action is to accomplish. The subject matter appropriate for reports for information is that which seeks to advise or inform the Council on a subject, but does not request any action or report by the Council. The subject matter appropriate for the consent calendar is that which recommends a specific Council action and is routine, noncontroversial, easily explained and can be expected to receive Council approval without discussion. A subject which is controversial and complex and can be expected to generate Council discussion should not be transmitted as a consent calendar item.

D. Completed Commission Work

It is the commission's responsibility to provide complete, concise and accurate reports to the Council, prepared in such a manner that the City Council fully understands the issue and what action, if any, it is being asked to take. Commission reports should include a clear recommendation, the reason for the recommendation, the facts on which it is based, points of disagreement within the commission or with staff, if any, and the minority recommendation, if any. Ouality commission reports and recommendations take into account the Council's necessity to view an issue from as wide an angle as possible. The Council must fully understand the relevant background and implications, including costs, of each action it is asked to take. It is the commission's responsibility to provide that requisite information insofar as possible. Submission of quality reports will enable the City Council to act knowledgeably and expeditiously on commission reports and will reduce the likelihood of the Council referring the report back to the commission for clarification.

Quality reports entail two key procedural aspects: 1) review by other affected commissions prior to submission to the City Council, and 2) proper report format and preparation.

1. Review by Other Commissions

Often the spheres of interest of various commissions overlap, depending on the specific issue. Before a commission recommends action on an issue it invites other commissions with an interest in the topic to review the subject and offer a response, whether or not the Council specifically requested such coordination.

For example, if the Recreation Commission is planning to recommend construction of a playground area in the Marina, it should involve the Waterfront Advisory Board and the Planning Commission. If the Commission on Aging is planning to recommend the funding of a health care clinic for seniors, it should refer the proposal to the Community Health Advisory Committee and the Mental Health Advisory Board. If a referral to another commission has been made, the commission writing the report indicates at the beginning of the report the fact that it made

a referral and what the response to the referral was, if any.

The review process is shown below:

Commission A develops draft report,
and refers draft report to

Commission B and others as necessary
who review and submit comments to

Commission A which incorporates comments,
revises report as necessary to send to Council.

2. Report Format and Preparation

The format requirements for reports to the Council are the same for commissions as for staff. These requirements are explained in Administrative Regulation No. 1.20. It is the Staff Secretary's responsibility to advise the commission of the required format, and the need to submit sufficient information and refer draft reports to appropriate commissions, prior to submission of reports to the Council. Questions concerning format or referrals to other commissions should be made to the Agenda Coordinator in the City Manager's Office.

Commission reports may be considered incomplete in one or more of the following instances:

- 1. When the report has not been reviewed by another commission(s) whose review is essential if the Council is to make an informal decision;
- 2. When improper format has been used;
- 3. When the recommendation or implications of the recommendation are unclear because of inadequate information.

When incomplete commission reports have been submitted, the City Manager may notify the Secretary, specify the changes necessary in order to complete the report and request that the report be rewritten. The Secretary may then confer with the Chairperson to determine what changes, if any, should be made.

E. Council Meetings and Agenda

Regular meetings of the City Council commence at 7:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month in the Council Chambers. Regular Council meetings proceed in the following order.

- 1. Call to order
- 2. Roll Call
- 3. Approval of minutes
- 4. Ceremonial matters
- 5. All uncontested consent calendar items
- 6. Items removed from City Manager consent calendar
- 7. Appeals with deadline for action falling prior to the next regular Council meeting
- 8. Reports of City Manager for action
- 9. Report of Citizens' Assistant for action
- 10. Items removed from Citizens' Assistant consent calendar
- 11. Reports of Boards, Commissions, Committees for action
- 12. Items removed from Boards, Commissions, Committees consent calendar
- 13. Reports of Mayor and Council for action
- 14. Items removed from Mayor and Council consent calendar
- 15. Reports of City Manager for information only
- 16. Reports of Mayor and Council for information only
- 17. Reports of Boards, Commissions, Committees for information only
- *18. Hearings and public discussions
- 19. Written communications
- 20. Good of the City (Mayor and Council)

Following passage of the uncontested consent calendar, the presiding officer asks if any Councilmember wishes to discuss any of the reports for information. Reports for information designated for discussion by any Councilmember are added to the appropriate section of reports for action and carried over as pending business until discussed or withdrawn.

The Council's procedure is to establish specific time periods for hearings and discussions and to interrupt other discussions when the specified time arrives. The public is invited to address the Council during public hearing times. An individual is allowed three (3) minutes to speak; an individual representing a group is allowed five (5) minutes. As a courtesy to commissions, the Council will hear from the commission Chairperson or representative designated by the commission at any time that it is considering an item involving a commission. The Chairperson or representative has the obligation to represent the commission's position. Any commissioner appearing before the Council as a private individual shall so inform the Council.

The first and third Tuesday of the month is reserved for Council workshops or public hearings. As the first order of business the Council considers the consent calendar; however, any contested items removed from the calendar are not discussed but are carried over for discussion to the next regular meeting.

^{*}The agenda will specify times for hearings and public workshops.

II. STAFF COORDINATION

A. Relation to Staff

The secretaries of commissions are senior staff members who are appointed by the City Manager. In some instances, a department head who is named as Staff Secretary delegates this responsibility. While other staff members may assist the commission from time to time, such as stenographers or clerks, only the Staff Secretary's attendance is required. Generally, the Staff Secretary is appointed from the Department which most nearly encompasses the commission's activities.

The function of the Staff Secretary is to provide technical and clerical assistance to the commission. The Secretary assists the commission to formulate its recommendations by providing relevant information concerning policies, regulations, applicable laws, background and the facts of each matter. In addition to providing such information, the Staff Secretary also advises the commission of the staff recommendation. In this sense, the Secretary is an active participant on the commission, although without vote, rather than merely a passive transmittor of information from the commission to the Council.

While the Secretary's role is to assist the commission, the Secretary and other staff assistants are not employees of the commission. At all times, the staff is directly responsible to the department head and to the City Manager. Reports to the Council issued by the commission and prepared by the Secretary should present objectively the commission's recommendations and deliberations, but also should make reference to any disagreement with staff, so as to fully inform the Council of the implications of the report.

B. Communications with Staff

All communications from the commission to any members of the staff other than the commission's Secretary, are transmitted through the Secretary. Conversely, all communications from staff to the commission go through the Secretary. All appearances by staff before the commission are scheduled through the Secretary so that they may be placed on the agenda. A staff person appearing before or communicating with a commission who is acting as a private individual advises the commission that he/she is not acting in an official capacity.

III. RELATIONS WITH OTHER COMMISSIONS, OUTSIDE AGENCIES AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

A. Other Commissions

It is incumbent upon commissions to coordinate efforts and resources with other commissions whenever they deal with overlapping subject matter. When one commission recommends an action relating to a sphere of interest of another commission, other involved commissions are notified and given an opportunity to comment before any reports are forwarded to the Council. Referrals for information or review of proposals from one commission to another are transmitted through the respective secretaries of each commission.

In order to develop a useful liaison between commissions, each commission should determine which other bodies regularly deal with overlapping concerns. Commissions which regularly impinge on each other's activities should request agenda, minutes and relevant reports from each other. Commissions which do not ordinarily relate to similar concerns need not routinely communicate with each other, but where an issue arises which is of concern to both, the two commissions should review the issue with each other before submitting a report to the Council.

B. Outside Agencies

Unless specifically authorized by the Council, commissions may not present the policy of the City. If a request for an official policy statement is received from an outside jurisdiction, the commission should refer the request to the Council. A commission may not take any action such as endorsing grant applications, receiving donations and gifts, approving use of City property, facilities or other resources, which commits or indicates an intention to commit the City without authorization by the Council and coordination with the City Manager. All communications from and to outside agencies are transmitted through the Staff Secretary.

C. General Public

Commissioners have the obligation to consider the welfare of the entire City, to be fair and objective in their deliberations, to consider all the information before them, and to afford due process to all who appear before them. The purpose of commission meetings is to permit open debate on particular matters, to hear public expression thereon and to inform the public what the commission is doing. No commission is infallible and it is proper that public opinion be sought, but no commissioner can permit his/her judgment to become subservient to the criticism of those citizens attending the meetings. In order to conduct its business, the commission has the authority to limit debate and public participation on any subject (see Participation of Public, Page 22).

All communications from the commission to members of the public are transmitted through the commission Secretary. Similarly, arriving communications are received by the Secretary and relayed to the commission through the agenda. The Secretary is responsible for acknowledging all communications received. For oral communications, see Page 22.

D. Individual Commissioners

Unless authorized by the commission, an individual commissioner may not represent the commission before any other commission, outside agency, or the general public. (See Page 9, "Outside Agencies," regarding representing the City before outside agencies.) When an individual commissioner is appearing in a private capacity before other commissions, outside agencies, or the general public, the commissioner must clearly indicate that she/he is speaking as a private individual, not as an official representative. Official City stationery may be used only for official communications authorized by the commission.

Each commissioner also has the obligation to work cooperatively with other commissioners. Commissioners should exercise self-discipline and strive always to be objective, fair and courteous with each other as well as with staff and the public. A healthy respect for the time of other commissioners, staff and the public is of critical importance.

E. Press and Other Media

In order to inform the public as much as possible of commission activities, the Secretary, with the approval of the commission or the Chairperson, should provide the media with pertinent information as noted below. Press releases should be sent to the Berkeley Gazette, the Berkeley Post, the Daily Californian, the Oakland Tribune and Grassroots. From time to time, it may be appropriate to provide press releases to other newspapers, radio and television stations.

- 1. Notices of Meetings and Agenda The Secretary should routinely send meeting notices and agenda to the above media, and to any other which submit a written request. Copies should be sent to the City Clerk for inclusion in the City Clerk's reference library and to the Public Information Office in the City Manager's Office.
- 2. Items of Public Interest Information concerning items of particular interest to be discussed at future meetings as well as recent newsworthy actions of the commission should be regularly provided to the media. Copies of these press releases should be sent to the Public Information Office in the City Manager's Office.
- 3. Policy Statements Press releases which state the City's policy should be cleared through the Office of Public Information in the City Manager's Office prior to release to the press.

The term of office of persons appointed under the Fair Representation Ordinance may not extend beyond the date of expiration of the term of the appointing Councilmember and must terminate upon the death, resignation, or recall of the appointing Councilmember. The Council may provide for shorter terms as is done in the Youth Commission. However, commission members whose terms have expired may continue to serve of their own volition until they are replaced. In such cases, the commissioner retains full voting rights until a new commissioner is appointed. Each vacancy on a commission is to be filled through appointment or reappointment by the Councilmember to whom the vacancy is credited. In the case of newly elected first-time Councilmembers, seniority of the commission members to be replaced determines which is to be replaced first. For example, if there are two newly elected first-time Councilmembers and thus two vacancies, and only one Councilmember is ready to make an appointment, the commission member who has the greater length of service of the two members to be replaced continues to serve until the remaining Councilmember has made an appointment. There is no limit to the number of terms a commission member may serve, unless specified otherwise in the ordinance which establishes the commission.

2. Commissions Not Regulated by the Fair Representation Ordinance

Several commissions require special qualifications for appointment (see Appendix) and are not regulated by the Fair Representation Ordinance. For example, the persons appointed to the Mental Health Advisory Board must satisfy occupational requirements required by State law.

Other commissions specify different terms of office, such as the Police Review Commission which sets terms of two years and limits reappointment by the same Councilmember to no more than two terms in part or whole. Specific rules concerning appointments and terms are contained in the ordinance or resolution which establishes the commission (see Appendix).

B. Absences

The Secretary of each commission reports the full attendance record of each member to the City Clerk at the end of each six-month period (June 30 and December 31).

After a member has been absent from two consecutive regular meetings, the Secretary advises the member that absence from three (3) consecutive regular meetings of the board will result in automatic termination. There is no provision for excused absences. Within one week of the third consecutive absence the commission Secretary notifies the City Clerk of the three absences. The appointment expires on the date the fact of the third absence is reported to the City Clerk. Within one week, the City Clerk notifies the commissioner that his/her term has expired and the Councilmember or Council, as appropriate, that a vacancy exists on the commission and that an appointment should be made to fill such vacancy.

IV. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMISSIONS

A. Appointment and Term of Office

By Ordinance No. 4803-N.S., all commission members appointed by the Council or by individual Councilmembers must be residents of the City of Berkeley.

1. Commissions Regulated by Fair Representation Ordinance

Appointments to most commissions are regulated by the Fair Representation Ordinance No. 4780-N.S., a voter initiative adopted in 1975, which requires commissions of nine, or multiples of nine, and which allows each individual Councilmember to make an equal number of appointments (see Appendix). In these cases, except for the residence requirement, there are no restrictions or special qualifications for appointment*. The commissions listed below and any created in the future by the Council are governed by the Fair Representation Ordinance.

Board of Adjustments Child Health and Disability Prevention Board Citizens Committee on Undergrounding Utilities Citizens' Humane Commission Civic Art Commission Commission on Aging Commission on Employment and Training Community Health Advisory Committee Community Redevelopment Commission Economic Development Commission Energy Conservation and Alternative Energy Development Commission Housing Advisory and Appeals Board Human Relations and Welfare Commission Landmarks Preservation Commission Personnel Board Planning Commission Recreation Commission Solid Waste Management Commission Transportation Commission Waterfront Advisory Board Youth Commission

*Exceptions:

Ordinance No. 4896-N.S. which establishes the Youth Commission, suggests, but does not require, age and scholastic level criteria.

Resolution No. 47,170-N.S. which establishes the Child Health and Disability Prevention Board, requires members to be parents of young children, child educators or health professionals as mandated by the State.

Ordinances Nos. 4570-N.S. and 4804-N.S., Humane Commission, require members to be persons who have demonstrated their compassion for animals and prohibit members from having a financial interest, employment or policy determining position on any animal shelter, animal care facility, animal research center, or any organization that deals in the sale or purchase of animals for any purpose.

An appointing Councilmember may grant a non-renewable leave of absence for a period not to exceed three months. Notice of the leave of absence must be filed by the Councilmember with the City Clerk prior to the actual absence. In the case of commissioners who are appointed by the Council as a whole, a non-renewable leave of absence for a period not to exceed three months may be granted by the Council. Notice of the leave must be filed by the Council with the City Clerk prior to the actual absence. During the commission member's authorized leave of absence, the commission treats the absence as a vacancy, i.e., the number required for a quorum drops accordingly (see Page 19). The appointing Councilmember or the Council may fill such vacancy by a temporary appointment for a period not to exceed the period of the temporary vacancy.

If a meeting is cancelled because a telephone poll determines there will not be enough members for a quorum, absences are computed as follows: Where a member reported that he/she would be present, no absence will be recorded against the member. Where it appears that there will be sufficient members to hold a quorum but at the actual time of the meeting a quorum cannot be assembled and the meeting is cancelled, those members who are absent will have an absence counted against them.*

C. Resignation

A commission member wishing to resign submits a letter of resignation to the City Clerk and to the appointing Councilmember or the Council, as appropriate. Once submitted, a letter of resignation cannot be withdrawn. The City Clerk notifies the Councilmember, or Council, and the Secretary of the commission that a vacancy exists.

*Exception:

Absences of Police Review Commissioners are regulated by Ordinance No. 4644-N.S. which provides for termination after three consecutive unexcused absences from regular or special meetings.

V. COMMISSION ORGANIZATION

A. Officers - Election and Term of Office

Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. Unless otherwise provided by ordinance, the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson are elected by the majority of the commission for a one-year term, and hold office until their successors are elected or until their terms as a member of the commission expire. The officers are elected at the first meeting of the commission after July 1 of each year. (Exception: Election of officers to the Police Review Commission is regulated by Ordinance No. 4644-N.S.)

B. Duties of Officers

The Chairperson performs the following duties:

- 1) Presides at all meetings of the commission
- 2) Appoints subcommittees and Chairpersons of subcommittees subject to the approval of the commission
- 3) Approves the agenda prior to distribution
- 4) Signs correspondence on behalf of the commission
- 5) Represents the commission before the City Council with the approval of the commission
- 6) Performs other duties necessary or customary to the office.

While presiding at meetings the most crucial duty of the Chairperson is to insure that the work of the commission is accomplished.
To this end, the Chairperson must exert sufficient control of the
meeting to eliminate irrelevant, repetitious or otherwise unproductive discussion. At the same time, the Chairperson must insure
that all viewpoints are heard and are considered in a fair and
impartial manner.

C. Transfer of Chair

In the event of absence of the Chairperson or his/her inability to act, the Vice Chairperson presides in place of the Chairperson. In the event of the absence of or the inability to act of both the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson, the remaining members elect one of their members to act as temporary Chairperson.

D. Secretary

An officer or senior employee of the City designated by the City Manager serves as Secretary to the commission without vote. The duties of the Secretary are as follows:

- 1) Provides professional and technical advice
- 2) Assists the commission in the discharge of its responsibilities,
- 3) Obtains clerical assistance for the preparation, duplication and distribution of commission letters and reports
- 4) Maintains minutes of meetings and records of hearings and official actions

- 5) In consultation with the Chairperson, prepares the commission agenda and notifies members of meetings
- 6) Reports on attendance record of each member to the City Clerk
- 7) Prepares Council requested reports based on the commission's action
- 8) Insures adherence to required report format
- 9) Refers draft reports to other commissions when applicable
- 10) Reviews minutes and agenda of other commissions and summarizes for the benefit of the commission, when appropriate, and
- 11) Maintains a current copy of the Commissioners' Handbook and brings it to commission meetings.

E. Subcommittees

From time to time the commission or the Chairperson, with the confirmation of the commission, may appoint several of its members, but fewer than the existing quorum of the present body, to serve as a subcommittee. On certain occasions, such as when a particular kind of expertise is not available, the commission may appoint non-members to the subcommittee. Subcommittees established for an indefinite period of time must be reviewed annually by the commission to determine if the subcommittee is to continue.

Subcommittees make recommendations directly to the parent commission. A subcommittee may not represent the parent commission before the Council, or other bodies, unless it has first received the authorization of the parent commission to do so. Staff is not required to attend or take minutes at meetings of temporary subcommittees.

VI. COMMISSION AGENDA

A. Format

The Secretary distributes before each meeting an agenda which usually includes, but is not limited to, the following: roll call, approval of previous minutes, public hearings, old business, new business, setting of next agenda, adjournment. The format of the agenda may be varied to suit the commission's needs. The agenda may be approved by the Chairperson prior to distribution. In order to meet mailing and duplicating deadlines, items to be distributed with the agenda must be submitted as shown below.

B. Submission of Documents

Documents of one to five pages needing typing must be submitted no fewer than three full working days before mailout. Special arrangments must be made with the Secretary for documents longer than five pages. Only documents requested by the Council or approved by the commission will be typed by the staff. Commission members are responsible for typing any documents they wish to bring to the attention of the commission but which have not been specifically requested by the Council or the full commission. Staff will duplicate documents for distribution to the commission. Documents needing more than 15 copies must be submitted no fewer than three full working days before mailout to allow time for Central Duplicating to process.

C. Distribution

If all necessary documents are submitted from the commission by the deadlines noted above, the Secretary mails complete agenda packets to commission members no later than four days before the meeting. In order to deal with emergency action items, it is permissable to hand-deliver materials after the four-day deadline or distribute materials at the commission meeting. An agenda without supporting materials may be mailed to a list of community organizations and individuals compiled by the Secretary, to the extent that budget permits. Distribution is also made to other commissions or City departments whose area of interest is complementary or whose work directly impinges on the subject to be discussed. The Secretary distributes the agenda to the following publications: Berkeley Gazette, Berkeley Post, Daily Californian, and the Oakland Tribune and Grassroots. In addition, the agenda is sent to the City Clerk for inclusion in the Clerk's reference library and to the Public Information Office in the City Manager's Office.

VII. MINUTES

A. Recording

The desire for a complete record of commission action must be balanced with the workload of the staff. While it is desirable to provide a stenographer to take minutes, it may not always be possible. At the minimum, the Secretary provides action minutes similar to those provided by the City Clerk shortly after each Council meeting. Action minutes list the date, time and place of the meeting, the members and staff in attendance, the members absent, and a clear and concise description of actions taken. Approved motions are indicated by MS&C (moved, seconded and carried) and include a breakdown of the vote. The vote breakdown includes the members voting yes, no or abstain. Reasons for making a motion, debate and audience reaction are usually irrelevant and may be included or omitted as the Secretary and commission may choose.

In quasi-judicial proceedings more detailed minutes are needed which summarize debate, list findings, and note testimony offered by appellants, witnesses, etc. Public hearings may require more specific and complete minutes, depending on the nature of the hearing. In the case of public hearings, a tally is made of speakers for or against and a summary of their views is provided, if possible. It is desirable to tape record meetings when resources permit; however, it is not required. If a tape is retained, it acquires the status of a public record and must be kept for two years. If, however, the tape is merely used for transcription, it must be erased immediately as required by State law.

Minutes are presented to the commission for approval at the next regular meeting. The commission may by motion make such correction as conforms to fact.

B. Distribution

Minutes are mailed to members no later than four days before the next regular meeting. To the extent that budget permits, minutes may be mailed to a list of agencies and individuals compiled by the Secretary. In addition, minutes are sent to the City Clerk for inclusion in the Clerk's reference library.

VIII. MEETINGS

A. Requirement to Meet in Public

The Brown Act (Government Code 54950 to 54961 inclusive), adopted by the State of California in 1953 and subsequently amended, requires that all meetings of commissions where a majority of commissioners attend be open and public and grants all persons the right to attend such meetings. The purpose of this legislation is stated in the Brown Act as follows:

54950. In enacting this chapter, the Legislature finds and declares that the public commissions, boards and councils and the other public agencies in this State exist to aid in the conduct of the people's business. It is the intent of the law that their actions be taken openly and that their deliberations be conducted openly.

The people of this State do not yield their sovereignty to the agencies which serve them. The people, in delegating authority, do not give their public servants the right to decide what is good for the people to know and what is not good for them to know. The people insist on remaining informed so that they may retain control over the instruments they have created.

Because important decisions are often made on the subcommittee level, the spirit of the Brown Act should also apply to meetings of subcommittees of whatever size. All meetings of commissions or subcommittees therefore must be held in a public place and all persons have the right to attend such meetings. Legal reasons to hold executive sessions are very limited and the occasions when an advisory board/commission could adjourn to an executive session are rare. Specific cases should be cleared with the City Attorney prior to attempting to schedule an executive session.

B. Regular and Special Meetings

Regular meetings may be held within the City limits of Berkeley only at the place specified in the agenda; once convened, such meetings may be adjourned to another location within the City if unusually large crowds or other circumstances warrant.

- o Adjourned Meetings All meetings may be adjourned to a time, place and date certain, but not beyond the next regular meeting. Once adjourned, the meeting may not be reconvened.
- o Special Meetings Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or a majority of appointed members on 24-hour notice. Only matters contained in the notice may be considered.

C. Notice of Meetings

In order to protect the right of the public to know when meetings are held, adequate notice must be made. In the case of regular meetings whose time and place is set forth in a formal document (bylaws, ordinance, resolution, etc.), no additional notice is needed. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or a majority of commissioners if written notice is provided at least 24 hours in advance to each member and to any news media which have requested such notice in writing. The notice must contain the time and place of the meetings as well as the business to be transacted. No other business can be considered.

The Brown Act meeting notification requirements for regular or special meetings do not apply to meetings of subcommittees. However, such subcommittees are required to meet in public places and to allow any members of the public to attend.

D. Quorum and Voting

A quorum is the minimum number of commissioners who must be present for the valid transaction of business. In order to take any action, a quorum of commissioners must be present. As defined by the Brown Act, "action taken" means a collective decision, commitment or promise to make a positive or negative decision or an actual vote. For the purposes of these guidelines, a quorum means a majority of actual appointees. Thus, if a board has nine actual appointees (out of a potential of nine), five members constitute a quorum. If there are only five appointees (out of a potential of nine), three members constitute a quorum. The number of affirmative votes needed to pass a motion is the same number which constitutes a quorum - a majority of actual appointees*. This insures that a majority of those actually appointed to a board endorse the action being taken. If one were to allow a majority of a quorum to take action (instead of a majority of these actually appointed) formal action could be taken by a very low percentage of those actually appointed (e.g., if there were five actual appointments to a ninemember body, a quorum would be three and action could be taken by two appointees).

^{*}An exception is the Police Review Commission, established by Ordinance No. 4644-N.S. which states that "A majority of the appointed commissioners shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and the affirmative vote of a majority of those present is required to take any action."

The following is a chart indicating the numbers needed to take action:

Number of Members of Board/ Commission/Committee	Actual Appointees	Ouorum	Votes Needed for Action
9	9	5	5
9	8	5	5
9	7	4	4
9	6	4	4
9	5	3	3
9	4	3	3
9	3	2	2

There is no legal requirement for roll call voting unless some member demands it.

E. Polling

"Polling" absent members by telephone to determine what their vote would have been is not permitted because no discussion or testimony is possible. In instances where the Council desires a prompt advisory recommendation and there is no time to consider the Council's request at a regular meeting, a special meeting should be called. If a quorum cannot be assembled for a special meeting, the Staff Secretary so advises Council and indicates the date that the commission is expected to be able to consider the issue.

F. Rules

Each commission may establish its own rules, limit debate and eject unruly persons. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to control public debate so that repetitive or irrelevant remarks are not made, so that everyone has had a chance to speak before others speak for a second time, and to expedite the business at hand.

G. Processing of Motions

When a motion is made and seconded, it should be stated by the Chairperson before debate. A motion may not be withdrawn by the mover without the consent of the member seconding it. The Chairperson may at any time, by majority consent of the members, permit a member to introduce a subject out of the regular agenda order.

Motions may usually be adopted by the "no objection" method unless any member prefers voice or roll call vote. This method of expediting long agenda is common practice, and any defects are probably cured by the later approval of minutes which should reflect a "no objection" vote as "unanimously carried."

Precedence of Motions Ή.

When a motion is before the commission, no motion may be entertained except: a. to adjourn; b. to fix hour of adjournment; c. to lay on the table; d. for the previous question; e. to postpone to a certain day; f. to refer; g. to amend; and h. to postpone indefinitely. These motions shall have precedence in the order indicated.

CHART OF PROCEDURE (selected motions only)						
Type of Motion	Second Required	Debatab'e	Amendable	Priority Over Pending Motion	Reconsidered	Interrupt Speaker
Adjourn (sine die)	l Y			Y		
Amend or substitute	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Appeal	Y	Y	1		Y	7
Limit Debate	Y		Y	except "table"	Y	
Main Motion	Y	Y	Y		Y	
Nominations		Y	1			
Personal Privilege or Point of Order				Y	Y	Y
Postpone to Time Certain	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Previous Question	Y			Y	Y	
Recess or Adjourn to Time Certain	Y	Y	Y			
Reconsider	Y *1	Y *2				*3
Table or Take From Table	· ·			Y *4		
Take Up Out of Order	Y					
Withdraw a Motion *5	Y			Y	Y	Y

Y -- Indicates that this action can be taken, is necessary, is required, is permitted or is applicable.

No mark -- Indicates that this action cannot be taken, is unnecessary or is inapplicable.

1 -- This motion may only be made by a person who voted on the prevailing side & is not applicable to "table" motions

2 -- if prior motion was

3 -- except for request for later action

4 -- highest subsidiary motion -- takes precedence over all motions except adjourn and privilege.

5 -- must be voted unless no objection

I. Voting on Motions

On the passage of every motion, the vote is taken by voice or roll call and entered in full upon the record.

- Roll Call Upon demand of any member, made before the negative has been put, the roll call is called for yeas and nays upon any question before the commission. It is not in order for members to explain their vote during the roll call. Any member may change his vote before the next order of business.
- Failure to Vote Every member should vote unless that person disqualifies himself for conflict of interest reasons. Tie votes are "lost" motions, and may be reconsidered later.

J. Appeal

Any decision or ruling of the Chairperson may be appealed by any member. The Chairperson shall call for roll call to see if the Chair shall be upheld. If the roll call loses, the Chairperson is reversed.

K. Participation of Public

1. Informal

The purpose of commission meetings is primarily to discuss commission business and take action. Members of the public may be recognized by the Chairperson to speak if a majority vote is taken to allow participation by the public. In addition, each commission may establish uniform rules and procedures governing public participation, including the amount of time allowed for each member of the public to speak, when public participation will be allowed, etc.

2. Formal Presentations

An individual wishing to formally address the commission makes a written request to the Secretary to be scheduled on a future agenda. The request is discussed at the next meeting at the time devoted toward settling the future agenda. The commission may elect to schedule the individual for a future agenda or deny the request.

3. Public Hearings and Workshops

A public hearing is held when required by law. This is a relatively formal proceeding, and is a legally required step preceding action by a commission sitting as a quasi-judicial body. A public hearing must include specific elements which are recorded in the minutes such as, testimony from applicant, appellant, interested citizens and introduction into the record of pertinent facts and findings.

A workshop is a device designed to elicit citizen input in an informal manner allowing maximum interaction between citizens and commissioners. Workshop sessions do not culminate in action at that meeting; legally required actions or recommendations should be taken at either the next regular meeting or at another publicly announced date and time.

In both cases the commission, when establishing the time and place for the meeting, should determine the period of time available and establish the portion of time to be devoted to presentations by the public.

a. Advance Planning

i. Subject Identification

The subject matter of a public hearing is usually clear, and very often the legal requirements of notice are specified in the law. The subject matter of a workshop may present some difficulty. Thought should be given to the structure of the meeting and any possible result which may flow from the hearing

or workshop. The following questions illustrate the kinds of decisions and advance planning which should precede any public hearing or workshop:

Is the subject matter clearly identified?

Is the focus of the matter sufficiently sharp so speakers can address the subject in a positive and helpful fashion?

Is the end result desired identifiable?

Will possible action follow immediately, or will action be deferred to another specific date?

ii. Notice of Hearing or Workshop

Where a public hearing is mandated by law, the form and timing of the advance notice is most often specified in the law. The commission's Secretary will handle all such requirements. Most notices are routinely distributed to the media, affected community organizations, affected neighborhood groups, and, depending on the specific subject, they may also be circulated to affected special interest organizations or individuals.

Certain hearings require, in addition to a mailed notice, a posting in the area affected by the subject matter. Again, all legal notice requirements are properly handled by the commission's Secretary.

Notice of workshops may incorporate any or all of the above elements, depending on the subject matter and subject to budgetary limitations.

b. Conduct of Hearing

The procedure to be followed for a public hearing may vary depending, again, on the subject matter, and the time available for the hearing. In the instances where a commission acts in a quasi-judicial fashion, certain minimum standards of receiving testimony must be met. These would include, but not necessarily be limited to, an introduction of the subject by either the Secretary or the Chairperson, testimony from affected parties or interested citizens, receipt of any pertinent documentation.

The public hearing should be formally declared open by the Chairperson and should be formally terminated by commission motion. If findings are required as a part of the commission action, such findings should be clearly stated for the record. If any commissioner must abstain from participation

due to potential conflict of interest, or has a disclosure of interest which while it should be made does not prevent participation, these should be stated at the commencement of the hearing.

c. Action

Any action resulting from the hearing should be clearly stated in the form of a motion, properly seconded and voted upon. The record should in such cases identify those voting "aye", those voting "no"; those abstaining and those absent.

Action must, of course, be by an affirmative vote of at least a quorum of the commission. This criteria is more specifically discussed on Page 19.

If no action is to be taken at that meeting, the Chairperson should announce this fact and, if possible, advise the public of the date when action may be expected.

d. General

- i. Tape Recordings of Hearings. There is no legal requirement that any meeting or public hearing be taped. Standard clerical service will provide a written set of minutes, which, when adopted by the commission, constitute the legal record.
- ii. Hearing from the Public. At public hearings and workshops, commissions have the responsibility to hear all viewpoints of any subject. In order to ensure that all parties are adequately heard, it is often necessary to establish ground rules. These rules most commonly include:
 - o Limiting the time of speakers
 - o Establishing strict rules regarding rebuttal, if it is decided that rebuttal is permitted.
 - o Requesting commission members to hold questions to the end of the public presentation portion of the hearing
- Commissions should be aware of the need to maintain basic standards of fair play and impartiality. This awareness must also speak to the need to avoid the appearance of bias. The Chairperson has the primary responsibility to ensure that the varying points of view are heard, that the hearing or workshop proceeds in a timely manner, and that the options for future action by the commission are clearly stated. Awareness of the varying interests within the Berkeley community is essential, and the City Council depends

on its boards and commissions to provide thoughtful advice based on the fullest possible study of the subject.

IX. GENERAL

A. Stipends

In order to remove barriers from citizen participation on commissions, the Council has authorized payment of \$7.50 per meeting, in lieu of actual expenses, to Council appointed members of commissions whose individual income or incomes as filed jointly for Federal income tax purposes is below \$10,000 per year. Eligibility is determined by the previous year's income. Once established, eligibility continues until such time as the member becomes aware that his/her yearly income has exceeded or will exceed \$10,000. At such time that member shall immediately notify the Secretary of the commission of this fact and request cancellation of eligibility to receive the stipend. When a commission member who was previously ineligible believes that circumstances have changed which will result in that person's current year income being below \$10,000, the commission member shall make a certified declaration with the Secretary of the commission describing the general circumstances which have occurred (loss of job, etc.) which will result in the member's eligibility.

Those commission members desiring to establish eligibility shall file with the Secretary of the commission a statement certifying that his or her income for the preceding year meets the eligibility requirements stated above. Eligible members are authorized to receive \$7.50 for each official meeting attended, not to exceed two (2) meetings each month.*

B. Parking Permits

Upon receipt from the commission member of the member's vehicle license number, registration number, make, year and model, the Secretary of the commission will issue a special permit allowing the member to park in the City's parking lot at Grove and Addison after 5:00 p.m. If a parking place is needed during the day for specific commission business, the member shall request the Secretary to request the City Manager's Office to issue a temporary permit, valid only on the specific day that it is needed. The request for a temporary permit should be accompanied by a justification.

C. Conflict of Interest

Members of Berkeley's commissions provide advice to the City Council, study various civil matters, and, in the case of certain commissions, function in a quasi-judicial capacity. Precise relationships vary in that certain of these quasi-judicial determinations may be appealed to the City Council; others may not be.

^{*}Exception: Ordinance No. 4644-N.S. provides for stipends for Police Review Commissioners of \$3.00 per hour, not to exceed \$200.00 per month, regardless of income.

All members of commissions should be aware of the need to avoid any instance of conflict of interest. Simple historical common law is that no individual should use an official position to gain a personal advantage. This "golden rule" concept is clearcut and direct.

Section 36 of the Berkeley City Charter directly prohibits the involvement by any City official, elected or otherwise, in any contract, work or business of the City, either directly or indirectly.

The Government Code of the State of California requires disclosure for certain commissions via a "Statement of Economic Interests" which must be filed once each year with the City Clerk. All commission members affected will be routinely advised of these requirements and the deadline date by the City Clerk each year. Not all commissions will require the same degree of disclosure. The Conflict of Interest Codes are designed to require only that degree of disclosure needed to protect the public interest while balancing that need with an individual's right to privacy.

In addition to this annual disclosure requirement, any conflict of interest situation should be publicly disclosed and noted in the official record of the commission. In such cases it is not sufficient to simply abstain from voting; the positive act of disclosure is required.

Should a commissioner be uncertain of the proper course in a specific instance, City staff will seek guidance from the City Attorney. It is important in such cases that this guidance be sought prior to the need for the commissioner to act.

BERKELEY BOARD/COMMISSION GENERAL INFORMATION LISTING

REVISED TO 8/12/77

BOARD/COMM.	COMM.	METHOD OF	LEGAL	SPECIAL	FUNCTIONS
NAME	SIZE	APPOINTMENT	REFERENCE	DETAILS	
Berkeley Commun Action Agency Admin Board	9	4 - Direct election of representatives of poor 3 - Elected public officials by City Council 2 - Representatives of business/labor/othe appointed by Council	er	Three year terms; quorum: 5	Advisory to Council
Berkeley Fair Campaign Practices Comm	9	One by each Council member	4700-N.S.	Reappointment by same Councilmember prohibited	Quasi-judicial; Advisory to Council
Berkeley Mental Health Advis Bd	17	Appointments by City Council; 2 Albany	48,476-N.S. Welfare & Institutions Code Sec. 5604	Three year terms; specified categor-ies mandated for membership	Advisory to Council
Board of Adjustments	9	One by each Councilmember	4780-N.S. 3018-N.S., Sec. 18		Quasi-judicial; Advisory to Council
Board of Library Trustees	5	Appointed by Council	2278-N.S. Charter Sec. 30	1 member is to be Councilmember	Manages Library
Child Health & Disability Bd	9	One by each Councilmember	47,170-N.S. 4780-N.S.	Three year terms; quorum: 5	Advisory to Council
Citz Comm on Underground Utilities	9	One by each Councilmember	46,254A-N.S. 4780-N.S.	Due to disband December 31, 1982	Advisory to Council

BOARD/COMM. NAME	COMM. SIZE	METHOD OF APPOINTMENT	LEGAL REFERENCE	SPECIAL DETAILS	FUNCTIONS
Citz Humane Commission	9	One by each Councilmember	4570-N.S. 4780-N.S.		Advisory to Council
Civic Art Commission	9	One by each Councilmember	3677-N.S. 4780-N.S.		Advisory to Council
Commission on Aging	18	Two by each Councilmember	4492-N.S. 4780-N.S.		Advisory to Council
Commission on Employment & Training	9 + 2 ex- officio	One by each Councilmember; (One local Director of EDD or Representative One Representative Alameda County Central Labor Council)		Per general planning structure in resolution, Mayor serves as chairperson; plus two Councilmembers on Commission	Advisory to Council
Community Health Advisory Comm	9	One by each Councilmember	4497-N.S. 4780-N.S.		Advisory to Council
Community Redev Commission	9	One by each Councilmember	48,376-N.S.		Advisory to Council
Disaster Council	34	14 by virtue of position title; 11 appointed by Director w/ Council consent; 9 one by each Council- member	4721-N.S.		Advisory to City Manager and Council
Economic Devel Commission	9	One by each Councilmember	48,379-N.S. 4780-N.S.	Automatic term- ination on 2/24/78	Advisory to Council
Energy Conserv & Altrntv Energy Dev Comm	9	One by each Councilmember	48,457-N.S. 4780-N.S.	Automatic term- ination in 2 years April 28, 1979	Advisory to Council
Housing Advisory & Appeals Board	9	One by each Councilmember	4844-N.S. 4780-N.S.		Quasi-judicial; Advisory to Counc
Human Relations & Welfare	9	One by each Councilmember	4844-N.S. 4780-N.S.		Advisory to Council
Landmarks Preservation Commission	9	One by each Councilmember	4694-N.S. 4780-N.S.	Duties to be transferred to Civic Art by 6/80	Quasi- judicial; Advisory to Council

BOARD/COMM. NAME	COMM. SIZE	METHOD OF APPOINTMENT	LEGAL REFERENCE	SPECIAL DETAILS	FUNCTIONS
Personnel Bd	9	One by each Councilmember	2342-N.S. 4780-N.S.		Advisory to City Manager, Advisory to Council
Planning Commission	9	One by each Councilmember	2898-N.S. 4780-N.S.		Quasi- judicial Advisory to Counci
Police Review Commission	9	One by each Councilmember	4644-N.S.	Two year term; Two term limit	Advisory to City Manager, Advisory To Council
Recreation Commission	9	One by each Councilmember	3706-N.S. 4780-N.S.		Advisory to Council
Relocation Appeals Bd	5	Mayor, confirmed by Council	Calif Health & Safety Code Sec. 33417.5	Council determined this would be sub- committee of Housing Advisory & Appeals Bd	
Solid Waste Mgmt Comm	9	One by each Councilmember	4576-N.S. · 4780-N.S.		Advisory to Council
Transportation Commission	9	One by each Councilmember	48,445-N.S. 4780-N.S.	To disband November 1979	Advisory to Council
Waterfront Advisory Bd	9	One by each Councilmember	45,688-N.S. 4780-N.S.		Advisory to Council
Youth Commission	18	One by each Councilmember; 9 by School Board	4896-N.S.	Members should be 12-25 years old; 1 year term; 4 year maximum consecutive terms	Advisory to Council and School Board

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